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A Dining Experience

Posted by Timothy Low under [Articles](#) | [132 views]



Dining out is a very common practice in our society.

Eating in certain dining environments doesn't really qualify it to be a "restaurant experience". Eating at a food court or a fast food establishment is a different style of dining, based around the principles of cost, convenience, and consistency.

Consistency especially applies when it comes to places like McDonalds. Their success is based around a formula. No matter where you are in the world, you know exactly what to expect.

This is always the risk when it comes to a restaurant.

There is nothing in theory to guarantee an experience in a restaurant.

A restaurant provides, for arguments sake, the following:

- * A la carte service – that is, someone takes your order
- * Food prepared fresh – well, as fresh as the quality controls that exist in a kitchen
- * The presentation of a menu, as well as a beverage list

Generally, there is one indisputable fact that defines a restaurant good.

That is, a diner pays for ease and convenience, and to receive an experience that differentiates between eating at home and dining out.

Having said that, a paying customer would expect a certain degree of expectations. Here are some good examples.

When you come into a restaurant, you are greeted in some shape or form. So understated, it should be one of the key aspects of any service environment.

Basics are pointed out to you. Often this could be specials. Sometimes, to break the server/customer relationship ice, you could point out where the facilities are. But essentially, management should work out what might be confusing to a potential guest and explain it to make them comfortable.

A guest does not have to signal for attention. Ever. This is what makes great service. No matter what, there is just the right balance of service that you to be able to get what you want.



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Rubba Gump Shrimp

Nothing infringes on your experience. For me, one of my pet hates is finishing your meal, and having your dirty plate sit in front of you for more than a couple of minutes.

But most importantly,

If something does go wrong (such as human error) that the restaurant DOES NOT ignore the problem, apologizes, and in some shape or form, fixes the problem.

Also, little pieces of detail help.

You want to hear music that isn't intruding. As I like to say to team, loud enough to notice, loud enough to muffle the next tables noise, but not so loud as to prevent conversation between a tables conversant.

A clean bathroom. Have team check on this regularly. Nothing is quite as off putting as to going to a toilet with appropriate paper, soap, or the like.

Overall cleanliness. But do it properly. For example, its good to clean tables (in the absence of linen), but advise team not to aim the spray like a gun and shoot the table so the cleaning fluid rebounds and hits other tables - and guests.

But above all, the experience is best when you are looked after.

When you are treated "nice".

The industry is not called hospitality for nothing....

5 COMMENTS

Fu Kua Restaurant

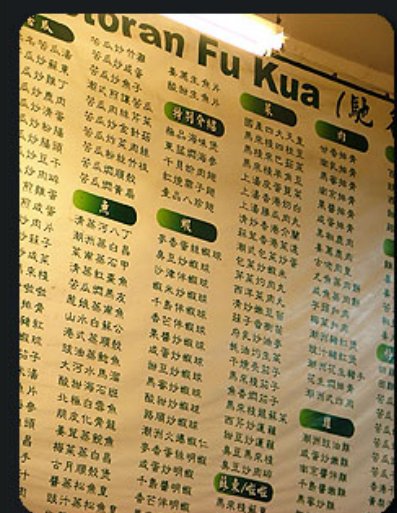
Posted by Timothy Low under [Petaling Jaya](#) | [245 views]



The bitter gourd (also known as bitter melon) looks like a cucumber but with ugly gourd-like bumps all over it. As the name implies, this vegetable is a melon that is bitter. There are two varieties of this vegetable: One grows to about 20 cm long, is oblong and pale green in color. The other is the smaller variety, less than 10 cm long, oval and has a darker green color.

Now that you're gotten acquainted with the bitter gourd, let's get to the interesting bit. Bitter gourd is often used in Chinese cooking for its bitter flavor, typically in stir-fries (often with pork and douchi), soups, and also as tea. And more recently, I've discovered a restaurant here in Klang Valley that serves everything bitter gourd. That's right ... from bitter gourd juice (yup, you heard me right) to dish and soup.

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FU KUA RESTAURANT PETALING JAYA

Fu Kua Restaurant (Fu Kua translates to bitter melon in Chinese) is located in Taman SEA, Petaling Jaya, just right behind Hong Leong Bank. Out of curiosity, I checked out the place one day. The crowds swell up during dinner so it's advisable to go get a table earlier. Ordering seems easy enough, especially if you can read Chinese menus. Fortunately for me, the menu has English translation.



Since I don't really fancy bitter melon (it's a childhood thingy just don't ask), it was tough for me to order the dishes. Especially when almost every dish is made up of bitter melon ... in some way. There's like bitter melon with black beans, bitter melon with meat, bitter melon with sigh, you get my point.

Anyway, after some contemplation ... I manage to order something basic. Bitter melon soup, bitter melon with salted eggs and another meat dish which I can't recall the name. And here's the surprising thing! I actually ordered bitter melon juice. Yup, call me crazy but I just couldn't resist the temptation!

So the drink came and I took a sip. The facial expression on my face was priceless, or that's at least what my dinner date told me. After recovering from the initial shock, my first reaction was to totally abandon that bile tasting drink! So I did. I order something a little more decent coke.

The dishes weren't that bad and in fact it tasted quite alright. Not as bitter as I expected it to be. The soup was quite tasty and the bitter melon with salted egg was quite good too. As I was taking it all down, I felt like as though I am going through a detoxifying diet. Yup, that was pretty much it.

And just before settling the bill, I challenged myself to finish my bitter melon juice. And to my utmost surprise, the drink was bearable. The bitter taste was not as bad as it is on the first time. My theory is that

all the bitterness in the dishes may have neutralized my taste bud

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Looks aside, did you know that the bitter gourd has excellent medicinal virtues. It is antidotal, antipyretic tonic, appetizing, stomachic, antibilious and laxative and that's why the bitter gourd is used in native medicines of Asia and Africa.

So if you got what it takes, I challenge you to finish that glass of Bitter Gourd Juice

Fu Kua Restaurant
Unit 19, Jalan SS23/15,
Taman S.E.A.,
47400, Petaling Jaya
11am to 3pm and 5.30pm to 11pm

6 COMMENTS

Kien Kee Sup Pedas Ayam Kampung

Posted by Timothy Low under [Kuala Lumpur](#) | [610 views]



Seri Kembangan is never short of 'interesting' dine options. For example ...

1. Ikan Bakar Garam (Salted BBQ Fish) - Behind the hokkien association
2. Weng Heong BBQ Chicken/Duck/Pork Rice shop - just after Public Bank
3. Farmland Porridge Steamboat - Opposite South City Plaza
4. Leong Ya Yong Tau Fu/Ji Bao Gai - Opposite Serdang KTM
5. Sister Lam Yong Tau Fu - On the way to Serdang town from Equine Park
6. Hakka Yong Tau Fu near market
7. Cheng Fatt Restaurant
8. Chinese restaurant (uses charcoal to cook noodles, opposite Cheng Fatt)
9. Hoi Tong BBQ Steamboat Restaurant @ Bukit Serdang
10. Hakka Village Restaurant @ Bukit Serdang
11. K.C.W Curry Fish Head @ Serdang Raya (same row with no.12's Pan Mee)
12. Pan Mee (night only) @ Serdang Raya - in front of a car repair shop
13. Ye Ren Bak Kut Teh + Steamed Ikan Haruan + Spicy Chicken + Siong Tong La la
14. Yap Beng Dry Bak Kut Teh + Stir Fried Shark @ Equine Park
15. Tomyam Noodles (tue, thurs and sat only) @ Beside soft drink factory, opposite Public Bank there

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8 COMMENTS

Waroeng Penyet

Posted by Timothy Low under [Uncategorized](#) | [423 views]



Flattened Chicken? Backside Soup? Happy Soda?

When I first visited Jakarta, Indonesia some years back ... I had quite an exciting culinary adventure. Other than extra strong spices, food varieties are quite similar with ours in Malaysia but it's the name of the food that shocked me. Nasi Goreng Gila (direct translation ... Crazy Fried Rice) Sup Bontot (hmm ... how do I put this backside ass behind ...soup?). I mean, these are just some of it that I can remember.

[Read the rest of this entry »](#)

5 COMMENTS

Weng Heong Bah Kut Teh

Posted by Timothy Low under [Klang](#) | [824 views]

Have I ever mentioned that I grew up in Klang? Yup, true-blue Klang boy. Stayed in Teluk Gadung. Went to school at La Salle Klang. Hung out at Emporium Makan and Great Wall. Back in those days, there were no Starbucks or Dome. McD's was the most "happening" place to be seen. If you're unsure of all those places I mentioned, ask anyone from Klang who took their SPM in 1989. They'll vouch for me.

Yup, I miss those days. But of course, what I miss most was weekend family outings to my favorite Bak Kut Teh shop in Pandamaran. We used to compete for the most plates of rice we could finish and you could see stacks of plates after we finish our meals. Sad to say, my favorite shop was long gone. And I stopped enjoying Bah Kut Teh ever since. I just couldn't find anyone that could make Bak Kut Teh that good anymore. And I moved out from Klang

Nah just kidding. I moved out of Klang a long time ago, after graduating college to look for a job in the city. I still visit Klang occasionally but not as often as I wished to.

But recently, I stumbled upon another good Bak Kut Teh outlet in Klang. And suddenly, I am visiting Klang more often again.



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14 COMMENTS

Mr Teppanyaki

Posted by Timothy Low under [Petaling Jaya](#) | [910 views]



I've been away for quite a while. Yup ... job obligations. No choice. But that's what everyone says, right? I actually miss doing this. I miss the rantings and bitching of culinary preferences among us 'reviewers' or better known as 'foodies'. So here I am again, now that what I have to do is all done and the next one is not until June 2010.

For my new article, I could probably summarize it into a single sentence but then again, where's the fun in that? So I shall elaborate further here's how it goes.....

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5 COMMENTS

Yu Ai Seafood Noodle

Posted by Timothy Low under [Kuala Lumpur](#) | [1,144 views]



Tucked in the far corner of Kuala Lumpur, there's a place known as Segambut. I looked it up on Google and found that Segambut actually covers a much bigger area. Did you you know that from the high-end condominiums of Mont Kiara and Sri Kiara to the middle-class areas of Taman Sri Segambut and Bandar Manjalara, and the rural

areas of Segambut Dalam and Kampong Sungai Penchala are all under the Segambut constituency? I was like ... wow, I never knew. So much for my geographical and political knowledge.

ANYWAY, I shall bring you back to what I know best. Located at Segambut Utara (Segambut North) is a little township sprawled with small/medium industrial lots. And amidst these workshops and factories, is Restoran Yu Ai ... a very popular spot for their Seafood Noodle. This place is actually a stone throw away from Mont Kiara/Solaris if you're familiar with that area.

Yu Ai is a simple food eatery that serves only what they do best which is seafood noodle and their new menu, fish head noodle if you fancy that. Having been in the business for more than 11 years, their family recipe of the much acclaimed seafood noodle has been a favorite for many.

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14 COMMENTS

Grand Steamboat Garden

Posted by Timothy Low under [Selangor](#) | [1,831 views]



I love steamboats. My friends used to tell me that maybe it's a Klang thing. Perhaps it's true to a certain extent. I come from a big family and when there's a cause for celebration, we dine out. In a town like Klang, there's only 2 places you can go if you have a family of more than 10. You either go to a seafood restaurant or a steamboat restaurant.

And I guess that why I grew with a certain preference for chinese food ... and trust me, steamboat is as chinese as it can get.

I still remember the days where steamboats were served on aluminum pots heated up with charcoal fire. And to top it off, most steamboat restaurants were open-aired. The heat ... the sweat ... yet we enjoyed our food. These days, air conditioned steamboat restaurants are normal and steamboat pot were heated using gas or electric source.

One such outlet is the Grand Steamboat Garden in Taipan USJ. I was there recently as an invited guest by Wilson from [PlacesandFoods.com](#) to try out their new concept which I find quite interesting. Imagine a cross between sushi and steamboat. Well, you don't exactly dip sushi's in the hotpot! What I meant was ...

a conveyor belt. Choices of food were displayed along a conveyor belt, just like those you see in fast food japanese sushi restaurants. You pick your choice and eat your heart out. And that's where the similarity ends.

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11 COMMENTS

Din Tai Fung

Posted by Timothy Low under [Petaling Jaya](#) | [2,111 views]



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Village Park Nasi Lemak

Posted by Timothy Low under [Petaling Jaya](#) | [3,995 views]



NASI LEMAK VILLAGE PARK RESTAURANT

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